

Department of Anthropology
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan

Date: July 2026

Degree Program: Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Anthropology

Mission Statement: The UAF Department of Anthropology is committed to scholarship and research in anthropology with a general geographic focus on the circumpolar regions of the north as well as research and instruction covering a variety of world areas and topical subjects. The teaching and research activities in the department cover the four subfields of the discipline: archaeology, biological anthropology, linguistic and social/cultural anthropology. The graduate program offers students the opportunity to concentrate study in one of the four subfields, to gain research experience and methodological training in the field and in the laboratory, and emphasizes empirical and applied studies.

Goal Statement: To assure that graduates are prepared to mobilize their training and knowledge of anthropology either to compete successfully in the job market in their chosen subfield or related areas or to compete successfully for admission to institutions of higher learning to pursue further graduate or professional education.

Intended Objectives/Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	Implementation Procedures
1. Anthropology PhD students must demonstrate expert-level fluency in the theoretical grounding of the anthropological concepts each student is expected to advance through the doctoral dissertation research.	Student's expert ability to synthesize a wide array of anthropological concepts across major schools of thought is tested using a comprehensive synthesizing paper or a timed comprehensive exam (PhD students can opt for a paper or an exam format), based on an in-depth (expert-level) bibliography of approximately seventy-five to one hundred scholarly works approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee. Assessment criteria are based on the following questions: - Does the coverage of the literature demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of complex theoretical concepts? Are there critically important concepts which the student had to discuss but did	After the completion of the exam—typically during the student's third semester of graduate study—the advisory committee evaluates the exam with a High Pass / Pass / Unsatisfactory grading system. Formal rubrics will be used for evaluation. Grades are reported in the corresponding SLOA form and recommendations for improvements are communicated to the full faculty for discussion during an annual SLOA meeting.

	not? Are there concepts the students did not address in the depth that shows complex scholarly thinking at expert level? - Does the student demonstrate expert-level ability to connect anthropological concepts across a wide range of perspectives on a specific, yet broad, area in the study of human condition that is the student's principal area of expertise? - Are there critical concepts, debates, and historical turns in the student's area of expertise that warrant a deeper engagement to demonstrate expert-level knowledge in the student's comprehensive papers/responses to the exam questions/prompts?	
2. Anthropology PhD students must demonstrate in-depth expertise in the methodology and research methods required for their dissertation research.	Student's expert ability to understand how specific tools of collecting and analyzing anthropological data are integrated within the overarching principles of creating anthropological knowledge in the areas relevant to their doctoral studies is tested using a comprehensive synthesizing paper or a timed comprehensive exam (PhD students can opt for a paper or an exam format), based on an in-depth (expert-level) bibliography of approximately seventy-five to one hundred scholarly works approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee. Assessment criteria are based on the following questions: - Does the coverage of the literature demonstrate expert	After the completion of the exam—typically during the student's third semester of graduate study—the advisory committee evaluates the exam with a High Pass / Pass / Unsatisfactory grading system. Formal rubrics will be used for evaluation. Grades are reported in the corresponding SLOA form and recommendations for improvements are communicated to the full faculty for discussion during an annual SLOA meeting.

	fluency in the relevant methodologies? - Are there methodological concepts and/or critiques and examples of the application of the relevant research methods that require a deeper engagement in the student's paper/response to the exam questions/prompts?	
3. Anthropology PhD students are expected to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of anthropological scholarship on a geographic study region and/or as relevant to a population or social-cultural group (for example, Dene societies of Alaska and Canada, Latin American immigrant or diaspora communities, knowledge bearers engaged in a specific religious, economic, or material practice, etc.).	Student's expertise in the knowledge of the anthropological scholarship focusing on a culture/community/region is tested with comprehensive synthesizing paper or a timed comprehensive exam (PhD students can opt for a paper or an exam format), based on an in-depth (expert-level) bibliography of approximately seventy-five to one hundred scholarly works, approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee. Assessment criteria are based on the following questions: - Does the coverage of the literature demonstrate an expert-level command of the relevant scholarship on the study region/population(s) important for the student PhD research? - Are there sources on the history and culture(s) of the study region that require a more robust engagement in the student's comprehensive paper/response to the exam questions/prompt? - Does the student demonstrate fluency in synthesizing regional literature across major themes and identify critical areas of need for the anthropological	After the completion of the exam—typically during the student's third semester of graduate study—the advisory committee evaluates the exam with a High Pass / Pass / Unsatisfactory grading system. Formal rubrics will be used for evaluation. Grades are reported in the corresponding SLOA form and recommendations for improvements are communicated to the full faculty for discussion during an annual SLOA meeting.

	scholarship in their study region?	
4. PhD students are required to demonstrate professional-level knowledge of two additional languages or two research tools or one additional language and one research tool, per the approval of the Graduate Advisory Committee, that are critical to achieve broad expertise in the area of their doctoral studies.	Student's command of languages and/or research tools are tested with a synchronous exam, held in a meeting with the student and the Graduate Advisory Committee, that includes a presentation by the student, followed by a question-and-answer period. The exam is evaluated by the Graduate Advisory Committee; the committee may determine ahead of the exam that an additional expert (such as a language expert) is required to assist with the evaluation.	After the completion of the exam the advisory committee evaluates the exam with a High Pass / Pass / Unsatisfactory grading system. Grades are reported in the corresponding SLOA form and recommendations for improvements are communicated to the full faculty for discussion during an annual SLOA meeting.
5. Anthropology PhD students are expected to communicate clearly and engagingly the goals, processes, and relevance of their research to diverse audiences, including academic colleagues of different disciplines, local community, and members of the public wishing to join remotely.	Anthropology PhD students are required to hold a public defense of both the PhD dissertation proposal and PhD dissertation. The Anthropology Department process for announcing PhD proposal and dissertation defenses – both are held synchronously in person and via ZOOM and open to the public – ensures the events are widely advertised via emails lists, social media, and university and community areas, with an advanced notice, to reach the communities of interests. Student's command in research communication is evaluated by	After the completion of the defense the advisory committee and all Anthropology faculty in attendance evaluate the exam with a High Pass / Pass / Unsatisfactory grading system. Grades are reported on the corresponding SLOA form and recommendations for improvements are communicated to the full faculty for discussion during an annual SLOA meeting.

	all Anthropology Faculty in attendance.	
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